

WORD FROM THE CLOISTERS

diary@thetablet.co.uk

Thank you, Father

“IT WAS A magnificent way for the bishops to say ‘thank you’ to their priests,” Fr Tom Grufferty tells us. Fr Grufferty, a retired priest of the Portsmouth Diocese now living in County Mayo, has recently returned from his second visit to Rome as a guest of the bishops of England and Wales. The first, 10 years ago, celebrated the ruby jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood; the second marked the golden jubilee.

The group of 28 jubilarians included two priests in their mid-eighties still chipping in with parish work, and another who shares his presbytery with two refugees. They were put up for five nights at the Villa Palazzola, in the hills south of Rome, and were warmly welcomed at both the Venerable English College and the Beda. At supper they sat with seminarians from the same diocese, who listened open-mouthed to tales of pastoral life in the era of miniskirts, vinyl records and queues for the confessional. One morning they were transferred by coach to St Peter’s Square, where they had VIP seats for the general audience. Priests might be forgiven for keeping their heads down when they see Pope Francis being wheeled over in their direc-



tion, half-fearing a ticking off for clericalism if their trousers were too neatly pressed. They need not have worried: they were greeted with a warm smile, and after having their picture taken with the Holy Father they were each presented with a set of rosary beads.

“I was blown away by the bishops’ generosity,” says Fr Grufferty. “If we are to get more vocations, we all need to be more positive about the ministry of priests, not only the laity, but priests themselves.”

WE ALWAYS knew that Yves Congar – the theologian more than any other who could

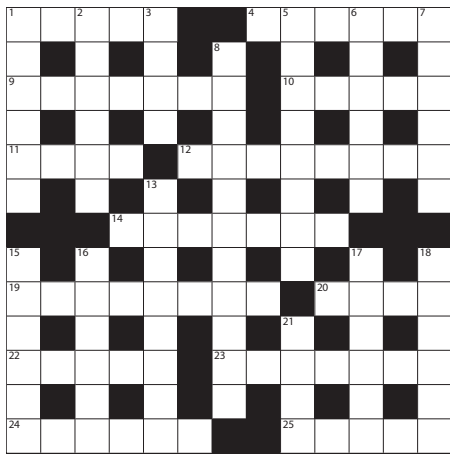
be described as the father of the Second Vatican Council – had a miserable time in the 1950s, when he lived under “a halo of suspicion”. But the depth of his depression, fury and contempt at what he called the “papal Stalinism” and “bottomless idiocy” of the Pius XII era has only become clear as his letters and diaries have appeared in the years since his death.

Congar’s period out in the cold included a miserable year in exile at the Dominican house in Cambridge. From here he complained of the “iniquity and stupidity of the current regime” in Rome. The gloomy English autumn left him feeling “among the living dead”. He wrote in his journal: “Caught outside in the rain yesterday, waiting for a sunny interval under a tree, I started to cry bitterly.”

Yves Congar: A Life 1904–1995, drawn from the autobiographical fragments in his bulging personal archives by Étienne Fouilloux, has now been smoothly translated by Patricia Kelly and published by ATF of Australia. After the Council, Congar found himself defending it from those who were dissatisfied by its timidity and from those who feared it had unleashed disruption and chaos. In 1994, six months after his ninetieth birthday, Pope John Paul II made him a cardinal. He died alone on 22 June 1995, while eating his breakfast.

PUZZLES

PRIZE CROSSWORD No. 885 Alanus



Across

- 1 County of Ireland one of whose abbeys gave name to the Book of Kells (5)
- 4 Breach in the unity of the Church (6)
- 9 The Angel of the Angelus (8)
- 10 Common tree related to birch often near water (5)
- 11 National language of Pakistan (4)
- 12 Right to vote of precious importance to Emily Pankhurst and associates (8)
- 14 High-ranking female member of aristocracy (7)
- 19 One of the fieldworkers given first indication of the Nativity (8)
- 20 Eponymous name of fountain pen rival (4)
- 22 Saint and early martyr in Rome, name of Greek goddess of peace (5)

- 23 Swedish city of famous university, whose original charter granted by Pope Sixtus IV (7)
- 24 Reade’s novel *The Cloister and the* ----- linked in the plot to Erasmus (6)
- 25 Italian city associated with St Catherine (5)

Down

- 1 & 21 Down: An artist’s or writer’s great work (6,4)
- 2 A love song or poem for the dawn of the day (6)
- 3 One in line to the throne (4)
- 5 Freshwater creature related to lobsters (8)
- 6 Relating to country where St Thomas died after mission of preaching there (6)

- 7 Roman Catholic convert, best-selling novelist with a Spark (6)
- 8 Second-century Pope born in Greece (11)
- 13 Saint from Dunbar associated with Lindisfarne, relics in Durham Cathedral (8)
- 15 Old Testament prophet, important contributor to Handel’s *Messiah* (6)
- 16 Statesman, philosopher and writer, contemporary of Jesus, adviser to Nero (6)
- 17 Prefect of Judaea, Pontius, who gave Christ over for Crucifixion (6)
- 18 Musical work such as Beethoven’s *Moonlight* (6)
- 21 See 1 Down

Please send your answers to: Crossword Competition 6 January 2024, The Tablet, 1 King Street Cloisters, Clifton Walk, London W6 0GY. Email: thetablet@thetablet.co.uk, with Crossword in the subject field. Please include your full name, telephone number and email address, and a mailing address. Three books – on Jesus, Christian Art and Catholicism – from OUP’s Very Short Introduction series will go to the sender of the first correct entry drawn at random.

Prizes kindly donated by

www.oup.com

SUDOKU | Moderate

2		6				3
	7		2		6	8
						9
		7	1	6		
			4		2	5
		9	2	3		
						6
	1		9	7	4	
9		3				1

Each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9.

Solution to the 9 December 2023 puzzle

3	4	9	2	8	6	5	7	1
8	6	1	5	7	4	2	3	9
2	5	7	9	1	3	4	6	8
9	1	5	4	6	8	3	2	7
4	2	3	7	9	1	6	8	5
6	7	8	3	2	5	9	1	4
1	8	4	6	3	9	7	5	2
7	9	6	8	5	2	1	4	3
5	3	2	1	4	7	8	9	6

Solution to the 9 December 2023 crossword No. 883

- Across:** 1 Titus; 4 Tarsus; 9 Retable; 10 Taper; 11 Cuy; 12 Starling; 14 Starlit; 19 Yearling; 20 Rhea; 22 Sheet; 23 Mycroft; 24 Paul of; 25 Music.
- Down:** 1 Thrace; 2 Tethys; 3 Subs; 5 Asteroid; 6 Sophia; 7 Springs; 8 Deuteronomy; 13 Stiletto; 15 Hyssop; 16 Rameau; 17 Cheops; 18 Baltic; 21 Scam.